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U.S. UNDERTAKING NEW SPY PLANE PROJECTS

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(Report by KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent Gurnov: "Powers Speaks")

(Text) (Passage indistinct) Powers, the same U.S. air spy who was downed by a Soviet rocket over USSR territory and tried for spying. (?It is evident that he has earned) the most terrible indignation of his bosses, who were upset by the fact that he did not commit suicide as soon as he knew he would be (?caught). There were rumors that after his return to America he was to have been tried and perhaps even executed. Later, however, the U.S. authorities changed their anger to favor. He was experienced and would be useful. Nothing had been heard of Powers for some time. Various rumors circulated about his wife's escapades. During the past few days, however, his name has reappeared in newspapers. It appears that he has resumed his old thankless business.

Near San Fernando, California, is a military base that cooperates closely with the Lockheed firm, which in turn manufactures the famous U-2 spy planes. Gary Powers is now an instructor in the art of spying. His bosses are CIA agents. In the vicinity of the U-2 base is another completely secret U.S. Air Force base to which Lockheed supplies perfected U-2's, new spy planes known as (?SR)-71's. It is well-known that during tests of this new plane several pilots have been lost. Lockheed insists that these were test pilots. However, newsmen who raised this matter said that young American boys, who were recruited directly from college for the dirty work of spying, died in the wreckage of the new spy planes. Only a limited number of experts were in on this secret, although hundreds of thousands of people were engaged in the project.

Workers who make component parts of the plane in Lockheed factories and laboratories did not realize for what these parts were destined. Most of the work, especially the assembly, was done at night. It is interesting to note the methods which the U.S. authorities, trying to avoid publicity, used to raise funds for the Lockheed contract. The cost of the (?SR)-71 project amounts to an enormous figure--714 million dollars. However, Congress, which according to the Constitution is obliged to approve all U.S. Government expenses, never heard about all this. The costs were partly covered by secret CIA funds and partly entered fraudulently under other items in the U.S. budget.

This again proves that the U.S. authorities, despite peace-loving statements about efforts to improve the international situation, have always been ready to retaliate. They are now basing their hopes on a new super high-flying and super-fast (?SR)-71. They are trying to reassure young men recruited for spying that this plane cannot be reached by surface-to-air defenses and can never be brought down. However, as U.S. papers ironically stress, the same thing in its time was said about the U-2, a pilot of which ended his flight so ingloriously. It is said that the courses which Powers now teaches consist of three main parts--height, photography, and return. Powers teaches the entire course. Insofar as the first two are concerned, he has at least some knowledge. As for the return, Powers had a very sad experience indeed and the same fate will await others.

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